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**Contact: Dianne Kaimann, OSF, Franciscan Federation Interim Executive Director**

 **202-529-2334 (Ofc) - franfed@aol.com**

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**Resolution at Franciscan Conference**

**Proves Fully in Sync with "Laudato Si"**

[Washington, DC] At the annual conference of the Franciscan Federation of the Third Order Regular of St. Francis of Assisi in the USA (AFC), held from June 19-22 in Indianapolis, Indiana, approximately 245 Sisters, Brothers and Associates considered keynote presentations and discussed issues relevant to evangelical life today under the theme, "Responding to God's Love: A Franciscan Moral Vision."

The three keynote addresses explored various aspects of Franciscan moral and political thinking. In her presentation, "An Aesthetic Moral Vision," Sister of St. Joseph Mary Beth Ingham spoke of the "way of beauty" developed by the Franciscan scholar, John Duns Scotus. Thomas Nairn, Friar Minor, emphasized St. Bonaventure's notion of conscience as a process of communal discernment, and Friar Minor Joseph Chinnici stressed that the starting point for Franciscan moral discernment, personally and politically, is not anti-war or even the environment, but contemplation. All the speakers agreed that contemplation, while it is incomprehensible to the world, is what gives every creature its dignity.

"Laudato Si" -- "Praise be -- You my Lord," the title words of Pope Francis' encyclical on ecology, are taken from Saint Francis of Assisi's beautiful "Canticle of Creatures". The pope reminds us that we need to care for the earth itself, for she is "our Sister, Mother Earth." The three keynote presentations harmonized with the Franciscan simplicity and humility evident in the encyclical.

In her Presidential Address, Eileen Golby, OSF of Clinton, Iowa, highlighted the work of the Dare To Image Ad Hoc committee that the National Board established in 2014 to discern the future of the Franciscan Federation. She also said the National Board designated the year July 2015 - June 2016 as a Sabbath Year of reflection and prayer by the membership with a focus on "how we can revitalize, refocus, redesign and increase inclusivity as we are in a transformative moment in the life of the Federation."

Table sharings among AFC members followed each keynote presentation, the Presidential Address and the report of the Dare To Image Ad Hoc committee. In sessions of the whole, the tables reported on main ideas generated from the input *vis-à-vis* the AFC theme and the future of the Federation.

Celebration 2016 - Federation 50th Anniversary

Eileen announced that next year's AFC will be "Celebration 2016" - a gathering of the whole Franciscan Family in honor of the 50th Anniversary of the founding of the Franciscan Federation. The gathering will be held June 17-20, 2016 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

2015 JPIC Resolution on Climate Change

The members unanimously affirmed the 2015 JPIC Resolution on Climate Change. The resolution of the Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation group, although developed months ago, fully reflects the pope's plea for care for our Sister, Mother Earth and all of Creation. The JPIC resolution states, in part, that we are called to sustain "our one planet Earth, so that all Creation may share in the generous gifts of Earth." Various actions were affirmed, such as, determining our "ecological footprint," personally and corporately, in the use of greenhouse gases.

The Federation Commissions of Elected Leaders, Charism Services and Regions held meetings to solicit input and update progress on specific tasks. The Franciscan Action Network provided two pre-AFC workshops on climate change and money in politics.

AFC Banquet Honorees

This year's AFC Banquet Honorees were presented to Federation members and Associates who exemplify in their life and ministry the beauty of creation through music, art and movement. Twenty-six awardees were honored this year at the Banquet held on June 21.

Election of Officers

At the conclusion of the AFC, Kathleen Uhler, a Franciscan sister of Allegany, New York, assumed the office of Franciscan Federation president for 2015-2016. Kathie has served as a member of the Federation National Board and the Spirit and Life Committee. She has held executive positions and served in organizations including Franciscans International, the Catholic Mobilizing Network to End the Use of the Death Penalty, and for six years in Hebron, Palestine with Christian Peacemaker Teams.

The National Board also elected Eleanor Granger, OSF of Rochester, Minnesota as it vice-president. Eleanor had served as Executive Director of the Franciscan Federation in the 1990s. She has also served on the Franciscan Federation National Board, the National Board of the Leadership Conference of Woman Religious and as a member of the LCWR National Office.

The National Board thanked outgoing president, Eileen Golby, OSF of Clinton, Iowa for her leadership in these challenging times of change for the Federation. She will continue serving as Board member and secretary. Franciscan Sister of the Poor, Mary Maloney, of Cincinnati, Ohio was recognized for her 6-year term of service as she leaves the National Board. Nancy Surma, a Franciscan Sister of Sylvania, Ohio, who served as member and secretary of the Board, was also thanked as she departs for a new position in her Congregation's healthcare ministry.

For the text of the full Annual Report, please see Franfed.org. Please also see: carbonfootprint.com for actions related to the 2015 JPIC Resolution on Climate Change. Postings about AFC 2015 on the Federation Web site or on *Musings* – keynote input, Dare To Image process, Sabbath, Celebration 2016, queries – all are welcome. Please send your postings to Dianne Kaimann at the Federation Office: FranFed@aol.com. Let’s keep the conversation going!